The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1522 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1946 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 36, NO. 11

Give to the Red Cross

Veterans Superseniority Ruled Out By N. Y. Circuit Court of Appeals

New York City—The Selective Service Act does not endow a war veteran with superseniority, a way ruled in a 2-to-1 decision by the United States Circuit Court of Appeals here, the highest court so far to pass on the question.

The decision reversed an award in United States District Court of damages to Abraham Fishgold, a war veteran, in his suit against the Sullivan Drydock and Repair Corporation, Brooklyn.

The appeals court followed the reasoning of the Federal District Court at Springfield, Ill., which, in a different case had banned superseniority.

In the opinion of the New York court, Judge Learned Hand declared that "the law not only does not grant any step-up in seniority, but positively denied any." Judge Jerome Frank concurred in Judge Hand's decision, all that life holds dear."

Judge Hand urged that the question be carried as soon as possible to the United States Supreme Court, adding, "We cannot conclude without expressing the hope, though it may not be realized, that our decision may not be taken as indicating any indifference to the plight in which the nation in the hour of its need at the hazard and so often with the loss of

Judge Hand's decision, all that life holds dear."

Nothing that the Selective Service act was adopted while the nation was at peace, Judge Hand observed, "It is not likely that a proposal would then have been accepted which gave to the initial priority, regardless of length of employment, to unmarried men—for the most part under 30—over men in their thirties, forties and fifties, who had dependent wives and children."

Judge Hand argued that the question be carried as soon as possible to the United States Supreme Court, adding, "We cannot conclude without expressing the hope, though it may not be realized, that our decision may not be taken as indicating any indifference to the plight in which the nation in the hour of its need at the hazard and so often with the loss of

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Hear "Cross-Section AFL" Opening April 6 on CBS

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor inaugurates a new series of 13 weekly radio programs over the Columbia Broadcasting System beginning April 6.

The name of the new program is "Cross-Section, AFL." It will be presented at 3:45 p.m., Eastern Time, Saturdays.

The purpose of the new radio series is just what its name implies—to give the radio audience a cross-section idea of what the AFL is, the kind of work its members do, the policies its unions espouse, and the results it has obtained for American workers.

This will not be the usual stereotyped studio broadcast. It will originate in each case from the actual site of the job, with occupational noise in the background as Bill Bowen, ace CBS commentator interviews workers, union representatives and, in some cases, cooperating employers.

The interviews will not be the ordinary kind, read from a canned script, but lively questions and answers given extemporaneously.

The first program will deal with the building trades in New York City and emanate from a construction job. Those appearing on this program will be Howard McGeehon, president of the New York City Building Trades Council; Peter W. Eller, president of the New York State Federation of Construction Co. and head of the New York Building Trades Employers Association, and a member chosen at random from the job.

Following programs will deal with the metal trades, railway employes, the printing trades and mine workers. In preparation are also programs on the textile, transportation, garment, government employes and white collar workers. In addition, there will be included regional reports from the South, New England, Midwest and Pacific Coast.

Don't miss these exciting radio programs. Listen every week beginning April 6 to CBS at 3:45 p.m. Eastern Time for "Cross-Section, AFL."

AFL Charges Favoritism In Stabilization Policy

AFL Demands Drastic Wage-Price Changes

Washington, D. C.—Demands for drastic revision of the government's new wage-price stabilization policy were voiced by labor, management and farm representatives on the AFL's "American United" radio program over NBC Dec. 10.

Dissatisfaction with the present policy was cogently expressed by Robert J. Watt, of the AFL; Emerson P. Schmidt, of the United States Chamber of Commerce and Raymond Ogg, of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Mr. Watt complained that the existing wage policy gives favoritism to strikers and violates the pledge that millions of workers who have heeded the President's exhortations to bargain collectively in an orderly way with employers without interrupting production.

He urged the adoption of a new single standard, applying alike to all workers and a single price standard applying equally to all producers. This suggestion was promptly endorsed by Mr. Ogg and Mr. Schmidt.

Mr. Watt tangled with Mr. Schmidt when the latter referred to wage increases as inflationary. He insisted that when purchasing power is widely distributed to workers in the form of wage increases, the result is less inflationary than when the profits are retained in the hands of a few shareholders.

Another tussle developed when Mr. Ogg, complaining about food subsidies, asserted that such premium payments put the farmers on the dole. Mr. Watt pointed out that farm income has never been so high as it is now.

Three more exciting programs are scheduled by the AFL over "American United" before the program is relinquished to other sponsors. On March 17 the topic will be "How Can Jobs Be Provided For Disabled Veterans?"

Watt Warns Agencies Give Invitation to Strike to Workers

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor publicly charged that the government's new stabilization policy fails to assure "equality of treatment for all workers" and constitutes an invitation to strike.

Sharply dissenting from new regulations announced by the National Wage Stabilization Board, Robert J. Watt, AFL member, bluntly declared that the board's "conception of the government's so-called wage policy" closes the door on millions of workers who prefer the orderly procedure of collective bargaining to going on strike.

"It is an invitation to these workers to resort to other means to gain their just and equal rights," Mr. Watt warned.

"The statement of policy adopted by the board's majority is full of uncertainties and can only contribute more confusion to an already serious situation with the inevitable result of further industrial unrest."

Mr. Watt asserted that the Executive Order issued by President Truman after settlement of the steel strike established as a general wage standard an increase of 18½ cents an hour above the wage rate in effect Aug. 18, 1945.

He charged that Stabilization Director Bowles on Feb. 21 issued a general order giving government approval to such increases in basic steel, iron mining, steel processing and coal fabricating where such increases were put into effect in settlement of strikes existing Feb. 14. But the same benefits were denied to workers in similar plants not on strike at that date.

Thus, Mr. Watt pointed out, a privileged class was created for strikers and other workers frozen out.

The new regulations issued by the National Wage Stabilization Board bore out Mr. Watt's charges. The board announced it would not be guided by any single wage pattern for the nation but would establish or recognize industry-wide or area-wide wage patterns. When these patterns become "sufficiently well-defined," wage increases coming within their scope can be put into effect without prior board approval.

The question of what constitutes a "general pattern," said the board, will depend upon the circumstances and the historical relationships and practices presented in a given case.

Settlements which have been made only to eliminate inequities with further adjustments clearly being contemplated by the parties, cannot, of course, although not always, reflect in such factors as the similarity or interdependence of products, or management or union identity." A second type "would be reflected in a similarity of wage-rate structures on a parallelism of job classifications even as between two industries which might each their products in entirely different markets."

In considering a claim of "gross inequities as between rates between related industries," the board said it would be relevant that the effects of reconversion developments upon wage and salary rates supported the same or different in the two industries."

Green Will Present Flags To Ernie Pyle DAV Post

Washington, D. C.—Foremost news correspondent of World War II, Ernie Pyle, will be honored by Washington veterans organizations March 15, in a colorful flag massing ceremony at the Department of Commerce auditorium. Highlight of the memorial ritual will be the presentation of official chapter flags to the Ernie Pyle Chapter, Disabled American Veterans, by William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor. The flags were donated by the Washington Central Labor Union.

Fundamental emphasis of the ceremony will be laid upon the importance of continued public and legislative interest in the welfare of the disabled, an interest often stressed by Mr. Green.

The Ernie Pyle Chapter, DAV, has been closely associated with the American Federation of Labor's commander, Frank Gardner, who is also delegate of the local American Federation of Radio Artists to the Washington Central Labor Union. He has worked in close accord with Frank F. Fenton, AFL director of service for the handicapped and disabled.

Fenton, AFL organization director, will participate in a radio discussion on the AFL's "America United" program March 17 on "How Can Jobs Be Provided for Disabled Veterans?" Other participants in the NBC broadcast will be Col. C. B. Hansen, assistant to the Veterans Administrator, Gen. Bradley, and Reuben Siverson, of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

Woll Demands That AFL Be Consulted On Allied Labor Policy In Germany

New York City.—Matthew Woll, of AFL vice president, demanded that the federation be granted equal recognition with the World Federation of Trade Unions by the allied military governments in Germany, and full freedom to work with German labor unions in all occupation zones.

Mr. Woll, chairman of the Free Trade Union Committee of the Labor League for Human Rights, in a challenge to Irving A. Brown, AFL representative in Europe, declared that "we categorically deny the right of the WFTU to speak for the predominant group of organized labor in America."

Instructing Mr. Brown to present the AFL's official demand to the Control Council, Berlin and to the representatives of the 4 occupying powers, Mr. Woll asserted that "to base our demand on the UNO official decision granting equal recognition to AFL with all other labor organizations, national or international in scope." In a cabled reply, Mr. Brown stated that he had filed the request through the State Department and was preparing to go to Berlin to appear before the council.

AFL interest in "the development of a genuine free trade union movement throughout Germany as the best guarantee of democratic and peaceful German" was cited by Mr. Woll. "Nothing is more likely to foment," he pointed out, "the interest of the AFL in the development of bona fide free trade unions to work with German labor unions in all occupation zones.

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AFL interest in "the development

Building Service Employes Union Gives Officers University Course

Chicago.—Sixty top-flight officers of 15 AFL building service local unions enrolled for a labor and economics course at the University of Chicago.

The 10 weeks' course will be completed by 7-night sessions. Nationally known authorities will lecture from prepared manuscripts, Dunn said, a symposium at which general discussion will take place. A University of Chicago secretary will translate the proceedings, and the Industrial Relations Center of the University will condense the lectures.

The building service employes' meetings will be held in conjunction with the Industrial Relations Center of the University of Chicago. This course also will include sections for our organizers and business agents. It will start immediately after the course for the officers. The officers also will attend the course for the stewards."

"We believe that with the course for the stewards."

"We believe that with our officers thoroughly versed in the principles which go to make up responsible union leadership, our negotiations with employers on behalf of our membership can be more intelligently effected. The general public, knowing that our local unions are led by men and women thoroughly versed in the rights of workers, employers, management, and the public interest itself, will support us in such negotiations as we are asked to conduct in the future."

"We are going even further than this," Mr. McFetridge declared. "We continued Mr. McFetridge. "We are starting now arranging for a course in public relations, also to be held in conjunction with the Industrial Relations Center of the University of Chicago. This course also will include sections for our organizers and business agents. It will start immediately after the course for the officers. The officers also will attend the course for the stewards."

ORNBURN TO BROADCAST UNION LABOR PROGRAM

Chicago.—A radio address on the "Union Labor and Peacetime Plans" will be delivered by L. H. Ornburn, secretary-treasurer, Union Labor Trades Department, American Federation of Labor, over the coast-to-coast network of the American Broadcasting Company on March 21, from 9:45 to 10 p.m. (Central Time).

The broadcast will originate from station WENR, Chicago. All members of labor unions, women's auxiliaries, union label leagues, their families and friends are urged to tune in.

DAVE BECK ELECTED TO UNION LABOR BOARD

Washington, D. C.—Dave Beck, international vice president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers of America, was elected to membership on the executive board of the Union Labor Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Beck replaced the late John M. Gillespie, former secretary-treasurer of the teamsters' international.

NLRB Accords Mine Supervisers Full Right To Join Union of Choice

Washington, D. C.—The National Labor Relations Board ruled in a 2-to-1 decision that the protection of the Wagner Act extends to mine supervisory employes even when they chose a national labor organization of production employes in their bargaining unit.

The decision was issued in a soft-coal case involving the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation's Vesta Mine and the United Clerical, Technical and Supervisory Employes, a division of District 50 of the United Mine Workers. The NLRB majority on the board on the union's petition to conduct an election at the company refused to grant collective bargaining recognition. An election was ordered in today's decision.

The NLRB until now had declared its position only with respect to supervisory employes who sought bargaining recognition only through organizations which were unaffiliated with unions of rank-and-file employes. The new decision is an extension of the doctrine that organizations of supervisors are appropriate collective-bargaining units.

The decision was viewed as strengthening the hand of John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, in the forthcoming negotiations with bituminous coal operators.

Operators, however, are expected to continue their resistance to Mr. Lewis' demand for recognition of the foremen as long as the possibility of a court reversal of the NLRB policy exists.

The majority decision was by Paul M. Herzog, chairman, and John M. Houston. Gerald D. Reilly gave a dissenting opinion.

The majority held that the National Labor Relations Act "directs that we protect the right of employes to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, not our choosing.

"So long as the Congress of the United States imposes no limitation upon their choice, it is not for us to do so," it added.

President Should Stay Out Of Labor Disputes--Davis

Chicago.—President Truman and his government agencies ought to get out of labor disputes and stay out, William H. Davis, former chairman of the War Labor Board, said here.

"True collective bargaining that maintains the liberties of both labor and management is the most lasting solution to wage controversy," Mr. Davis declared.

He conceded, however, that arbitration was the only way out in cases where emotions were aroused and prestige became implicated.

Mr. Davis described Mr. Truman as a good man with sound instincts, but said that he should shun labor relations because "he doesn't know his way around."

"As a result of exasperation," he continued, "there is a strong tendency in Congress toward greater efforts by the federal government to arbitrate in labor disputes.

"Aside from a possible strengthening of the conciliation service, I wouldn't advise the President Truman to urge that the government wouldn't interfere for a year in these controversies. Let the parties concerned bargain and bargain. They'll settle things."

Mr. Davis, now a patent attorney, likened the War Labor Board to a cactus:

"Anyone who tried to lean on us got stuck."

He gave the opinion that price control should be continued until production caught up with demand, with the administration removing ceilings on as many articles as possible. Stabilization, he said, enables a manufacturer to know his costs far in advance, are an aid rather than a hindrance to increased production, he said.

Higher Minimum Wage Reported Out By Senate Group After Hot Debate

Washington, D. C.—An immediate increase in the minimum wage to 65 cents an hour and extension of minimum wage and overtime coverage to employes of "any employer whose business affects commerce" were recommended by a subcommittee of the Labor Standards Law of 1938 by the Senate's Committee on Education and Labor.

Senators Tunnell of Delaware and Pepper of Florida, members of the majority, insisted that an immediate advance to at least 65 cents was imperative.

"With a national income of $160,000,000,000," they declared, "a 40-cent minimum wage yields the worker at substandard wages a smaller proportion of the nation's increased wealth than a 60-cent minimum yielded in 1938 on a $64,000,000,000 national income of 1938. While national income per capita has risen over 100 percent in 7 years (at least 73 percent when adjusted for price changes), the income of the underpaid has not kept anything like the same proportion."

The proposed bill broadens the coverage of the act to include seamen so far as minimum wages are concerned but not overtime.

Describing the purpose of the bill, Senators Tunnell and Pepper said: "It is but a preliminary step toward our eventual goal of full employment at high wages for all; but it is as great a step as our economy can afford to take at one time. It must be taken at once if we are not to be faced with an ever-increasing multitude of overfed, underhoused, underprivileged workers.

"On behalf of the other members of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor who have approved the legislation described in this report, I urge immediate action by the Congress to the end that substandards of wages in interstate commerce shall be once and for all abolished from the national scene."

The bill provides that in 2 years after enactment the statutory minimum wage shall be raised to 70 cents an hour and in 5 years to 75 cents.

As in the present law, industry committees, composed of employer, labor and public members, will be permitted to adjust minimum wages upward more rapidly than provided in the bill—but no higher than the ceiling of 75 cents.

A minority report suggesting an immediate rise to 55 cents and an ultimate level of 60 cents was brought in by 6 members who called the majority proposals inflationary.

Two Democratic Senators, Ellender of Louisiana and Fulbright of Arkansas, joined with Senators Taft of Ohio, Ball of Minnesota, Donnell of Missouri and Smith of New Jersey in condemning the wage scale proposed by the majority and the clause expanding coverage of the current act.

The bill, likely to come up for consideration in 10 days, seems destined to bring on a long struggle in the Senate. It had a stormy time in committee, where differences reached such a point that the members were hurriedly called together by its supporters in a futile effort to reach a compromise.

AFL Metal Trades Win Big Pay Hike In Coast Shipyards and Navy Yards

Washington, D. C.—AFL Metal Trades unions scored two significant victories in their battle to have an 18-cent-an-hour increase put into effect for 450,000 workers in the private shipyards and for 200,000 in the government navy yards.

Their first big "break" came on the Pacific Coast. There, at a coast shipbuilding stabilization conference—participated in by representatives of labor, management and government agencies—the parties agreed to the raise. It will apply to an estimated 175,000 workers, 40 percent of the nation's total.

Under a resolution adopted by the parley, the increase will be retroactive to December 4 on all work being performed for the government and the cost of which is reimbursable under contracts between the yards and the federal procurement agencies covering Army and Maritime Commission.

Where costs are not reimbursable, the effective date of the increase was set for March 4. Union officials said this sort of agreement will apply only to a few small yards which have been engaged in private, not government shipbuilding work.

Also, the unions won their battle to retain an 11.6 percent pay differential on ship repair work, above the rate on work in new ship construction.

Meanwhile, a delegation of AFL Metal Trades representatives headed by Sandy Trowbridge, secretary-treasurer of the Metal Trades Department, called upon top navy officials in Washington on Wednesday and asked that an 18-cent increase also be put into effect immediately for 200,000 workers in the government-owned navy yards.

Navy chiefs previously promised that whatever raise the private yards accepted would be paid in the navy yards, as well, and the union heads insisted that the time had come to fulfill the promise. They asked, too, that the increase be made retroactive to December 4.

There will be great real results. Assistant Secretary John L. Sullivan assured the delegation the Navy Department would honor its promise—and would put the 18-cent increase into effect before the end of this month, without waiting for other "holdout" private yards to apply the

Senate Turns To Mediation After Junking Case Bill

Washington, D. C.—Senator Ellender of Louisiana revealed that the Senate Education and Labor Committee had junked the Case Strike Control Bill for a new measure centering around an "independent Federal Mediation Board."

"The only thing left of the Case bill is its number and its title," he told reporters.

Senator Ellender is one of 7 committee members appointed to study the bill sponsored by Representative Case, Republican, of South Dakota, and draft a government-wide plan for dealing with labor disputes.

Senator Murray, chairman of the Labor Committee and head of the drafting group, announced that he would have a statement later on the new bill.

Senator Ellender reported that it will be a 2-step plan for preventing industrial strife:

First, encouragement of "real collective bargaining" with provisions in contracts for settlement of all grievances.

Second, conciliation and mediation by the new board which would be independent of the present agency housed in the Labor Department. The Case bill would have set up a government by injunction, though not always, reflected in such factors as the similarity or interdependence of products, or management or union identity." A second type "would be reflected in a similarity of wage-rate structures on a parallelism of job classifications even as between two industries which might each their products in entirely different markets."

In considering a claim of "gross inequities as between rates between related industries," the board said it would be relevant that the effects of reconversion developments upon wage and salary rates supported the same or different in the two industries."

VET HOSPITALS CREATE THOUSANDS OF NEW JOBS

Washington, D. C.—The Veterans Administration's $448,000,000 hospital construction program will require 70,000 employes, or one-half day's work by building tradesmen, L. H. Tripp, director of VA's Construction Service, estimated.

The program will provide employment for thousands of workers and medical care for thousands of disabled veterans.

Announced February 16 by Gen. Omar N. Bradley, administrator of veterans affairs, it is the largest hospital construction program in the history of the world. VA hospital construction during the past 2 years totaled only $270,000,000 compared with the $448,000,000 which will be spent in the next few years.

LOCAL UNION HONORED FOR BOND PURCHASES

Washington, D. C.—A United States Treasury citation for distinguished service was awarded to Waterbury Local No. 2 of the International Plate Printers, Die Stampers and Engravers Union, for promotion of the sward was made to the local's executive committee by Ernest J. Fontana, regional representative of the U. S. Savings Bonds Division, Labor Unit.

The presentation of this citation represents the Treasury's recognition of the achievement given by the 1,000 members of your union to the War and Victory Bond program." Mr. Fontana said in presenting the award, "Your membership through 100 percent participation in the payroll savings plan has achieved an average of 11 percent of its over-all quota. This honor roll award places you close to the top among locals of the country for bond investment by members."

CRUIKSHANK SUPPORTS MORE SOCIAL SECURITY

Washington, D. C.—In two appearances before congressional committees, Nelson Cruikshank, AFL Social Security Director, advocated passage of legislation broadening the coverage and benefits of social security and of another bill calling for construction of more hospital and health centers in the nation.

Cruikshank told the House Ways and Means Committee that in addition to the changes already suggested the Social Security Act should be simplified and made more understandable to the people.

Testifying before the subcommittee on Health of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, Cruikshank said that new hospital and health centers are a step in the right direction but that the country needs an effective health insurance program, as well.

AFL SPONSORS DINNER BOOSTING BIG NAVY

Philadelphia.—The AFL Metal Trades Council is sponsoring a gala dinner March 18 at the Broad Hotel here, to publicize labor behind the program—"A Navy Second to None."

AFL President William Green has accepted the invitation of the Philadelphia naval shipyard employes to address the gathering at which high-ranking Navy Department officials have been invited. Joseph Heath, president of the Metal Trades Council, will preside as toastmaster.

The American Federation of Labor has consistently and with undivided allegiance supported the construction and maintenance of a United States Navy second to none in the world.